



H.CON.RES. 370 – EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR DESIGNATION OF SEPTEMBER 2008 AS "GOSPEL MUSIC HERITAGE MONTH" AND HONORING GOSPEL MUSIC FOR ITS VALUABLE AND LONGSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CULTURE OF THE UNITED STATES

FLOOR SITUATION

H.Con.Res. 370 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Representative Sheila Jackson-Lee (D-TX) on June 10, 2008. The House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform agreed to the bill by voice vote on June 12, 2008.

H.Con.Res. 370 is expected to be considered on the floor of the House on June 24, 2008.

SUMMARY

H.Con.Res. 370 resolves that Congress supports the designation of 'Gospel Music Heritage Month' which would recognize the contributions to the culture of the United States derived from the rich heritage of gospel music and gospel music artists.

BACKGROUND

Although difficult to pinpoint, the history and roots of Gospel music can be traced to many origins and influences. These influences include genres such as African music, Irish folk songs and church hymns, and American styles of music such as the blues and jazz. Gospel can be traced back to as early as the 18th century when African American slaves developed songs that would be sung as they worked. While Gospel music has undergone many changes and divided into many sub-genres since the 18th century, Gospel has always been a spiritual and emotional form of music. Today, many genres of Gospel music exist, including Urban Contemporary Gospel, Christian Gospel, Southern Gospel, Gospel Blues, and Bluegrass Gospel.

Early Gospel pioneers influencing later generation of Gospel musical artists include Thomas Dorsey, Mahalia Jackson, and Diana Washington. Later and popular Gospel artists include Sam Cooke, Al Green, Aretha Franklin, Buddy Holly, Whitney Houston, and Elvis Presley.

STAFF CONTACT

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